Lake Fort Smith State Park

Lake Fort Smith State Park is your gateway to adventure in the natural diversity of the Boston Mountains. The park overlooks Lake Fort Smith in the rugged Boston Mountain Range of the northwest Arkansas Ozarks.

Originally a 1930's WPA Fort Smith city park, the area became a popular state park in 1973. Following a move from its original location, the state park reopened in 2008 on the western side of a 1,400-acre reservoir made by enlarging and joining lakes Fort Smith and Shepherd Springs. This is a beautiful lake surrounded by the Ozark Mountains, for recreation, plus, water storage to supply Fort Smith and the surrounding area.

The 165-mile Ozark Highlands Trail has its western trailhead in the park. This backpacking trail, heralded as one of the most scenic in the nation, begins at our visitor center skirts Lake Fort Smith, enters the Ozark National Forest where it takes the hiker across hills and hollows, crevices, bluffs, and past numerous waterfalls. The backpacker can walk from the state park, across the Ozark National Forest, through several wilderness areas, and along the Buffalo National River.

The park offers hiking and backpacking workshops, boating and kayaking courses, birding and wildlife courses, nature photography, art, and journaling classes, outdoor cooking, and many adventures by land and water.

Every season is a new adventure in the Ozarks. From the splendor of the blooming dogwoods and redbuds in the spring to the blaze of bright oranges, reds and yellows in the fall, the mountains are always alive. A few moments of quiet observation at dawn or dusk reveals the sounds and sights of the bountiful wildlife which live here.

Facilities

Camping ◆ Choose from 20 campsites with full hookups and 10 campsites with water & electric. Hot showers in a heated bathhouse provide year-round convenience. Two sites are barrier-free.
Cabins ◆ Ten rental cabins include one-bedroom and two-bedroom designs featuring a private bathroom for each bedroom. Each cabin includes a great room with wood-burning fireplace, high definition satellite TV, kitchen and dining area. At the back of each cabin is a large, elevated covered deck. Two cabins are barrier-free. The toll-free number for cabin reservations is: 888-695-3526.
Group Lodging ◆ Group facilities include a dining hall and two group lodges with kitchenettes. Featuring single beds, plus private rooms for counselors, each lodge can accommodate 28-32 persons.
Marina ◆ Rent canoes, kayaks, pedal boats, fishing boats, and party barges. Purchase bait, tackle, vending, and other supplies. A double lane boat ramp is nearby.
Trails ◆ A perfect way to enjoy the seasonal beauty of the Ozark Mountains is to hike the park's trails.

The park is the western terminus of the Ozark Highlands Trail (OHT), a trail offering hiking and backpacking as scenic and challenging as found anywhere in the country. This 165-mile trail passes through the heart of the Ozark Mountains.
Other Park Facilities ◆ Enjoy the picnic sites, a pavilion, playground, swimming pool, and visitor center featuring interactive exhibits, a meeting/classroom, and gift shop.

Interpretive Services

The visitor center includes a large exhibit gallery emphasizing that through time, good water has made this valley a place of hope, faith, and sacrifice. You will see a log cabin, covered wagon, a recreated Shepherd Spring, and lake diorama. A 16-minute video further connects the water resources of the valley with man's presence here.

Interpretive programs are offered to all park visitors throughout the year. Programs include guided hikes, nature talks, wildlife viewing, kayaking, lake tours, and demonstrations throughout the park and at the visitor center.

Lake Fort Smith State Park is your gateway to adventure in the natural diversity of the Boston Mountains. The park specializes in adventure activities. These include workshops to prepare for outdoor activities, schools in backpacking and kayaking. Outdoor skills workshops may include campfire cooking, birding, safety and survival, outdoor ethics, journaling, art, photography, and more.

Groups may request special programs to meet specific interests year-round. Advance arrangements are necessary.

The Arkansas State Park System is a leader in providing curriculum-based, hands-on resource support for teachers and students. Lake Fort Smith staff offer curriculum-based educational programs in which the lessons of the classroom become real in the resources of the park. Contact park interpreter for more information.

Location

The park is 26 miles north of Alma, and 32 miles south of Fayetteville. From I-540 take exit 29 at Mountainburg, then scenic highway 71, 8 miles north to Shepherd Springs Road then 2 miles to park entrance.

For further information on park hours, fees or reservations, contact:
Lake Fort Smith State Park
P.O. Box 4
Mountainburg, AR 72946
Telephone: (479) 369-2469
Fax: (479) 369-4412
e-mail: lakefortsmith@arkansas.com
Visitor Center GPS:
35° 41' 72.1" N / 94° 07' 14.1" W

Book Online Reservations:
www.ArkansasStateParks.com

For further information on Arkansas's other fine state parks, contact:
Arkansas State Parks
One Capitol Mall, 4A-900
Little Rock, AR 72201
Telephone: (501) 682-1191
www.ArkansasStateParks.com

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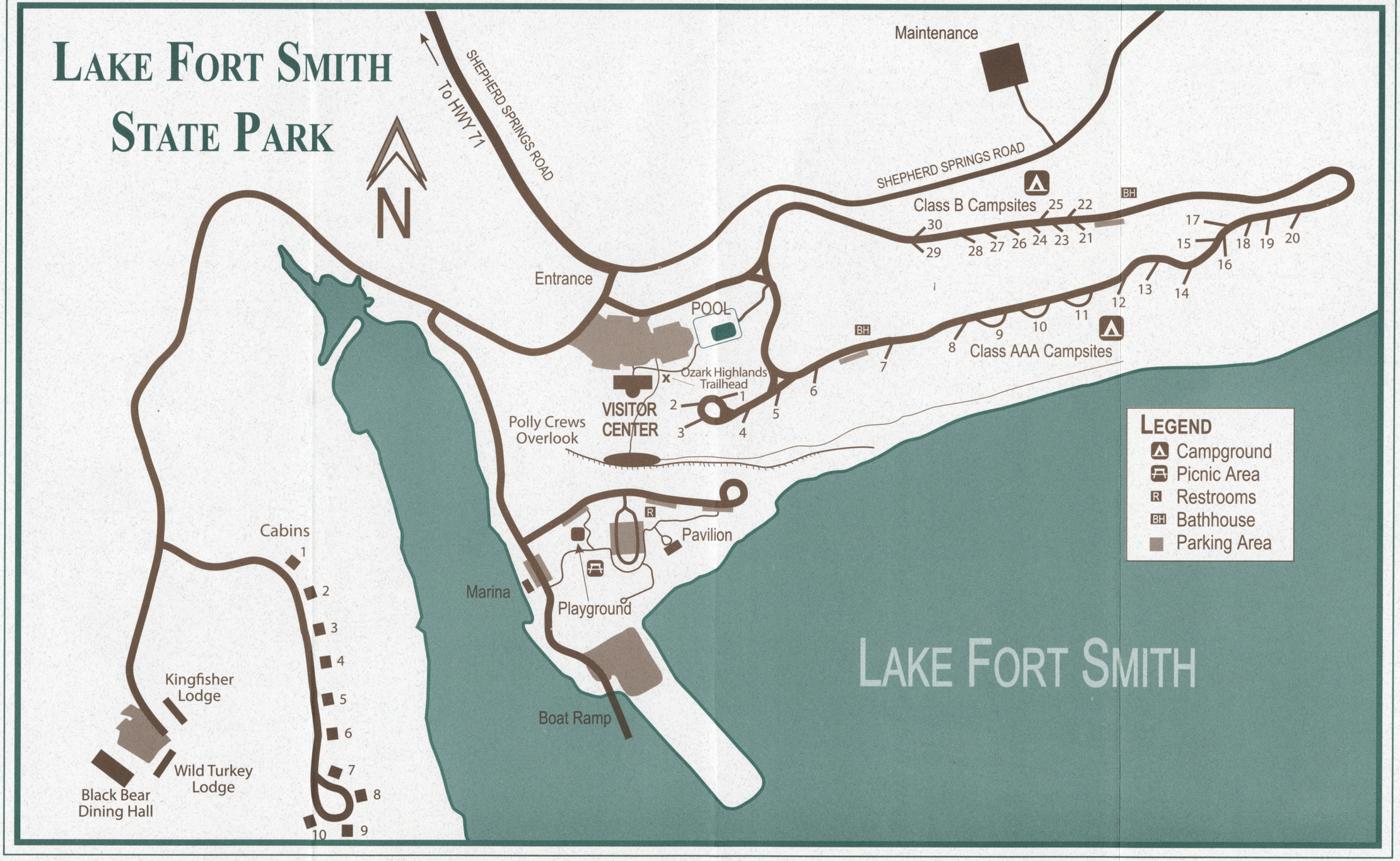
Arkansas
Department of Parks & Tourism

Lake Fort Smith State Park



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